

# CORPORATE COUNSEL

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Elon Musk. Photo: Maja Hitij/Getty Images/Bloomberg

## NEWS

### 'There Will Be Blood': Musk Says Tesla Hiring Litigators Who Are 'Hardcore Streetfighters'

"He's in a situation where either he's going to be a defendant, or he himself might be a plaintiff, bringing libel cases against the person who is accusing him of this conduct," UCLA law professor James Park said.

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General Counsel and In House Counsel



By Hugo Guzman

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In another surprising move by the world's richest man, Tesla CEO Elon Musk took to Twitter on Friday to announce that the electric car company "is building a hardcore litigation department where we directly initiate & execute lawsuits. The team will report directly to me."

He asked interested attorneys to submit three to five bullet points providing evidence of exceptional ability and to submit the information to justice@tesla.com. In a subsequent tweet, he added: "Looking for hardcore streetfighters, not white-shoe lawyers like Perkins or Cooley who thrive on corruption. There will be blood."

Musk didn't say why he deemed Perkins Coie and Cooley corrupt. Spokespeople for the Big Law heavyweights did not immediately respond to requests for comment. However, in January, The Wall Street Journal reported that Cooley had stood up to a threat from Musk warning of consequences if it refused to fire an associate who helped investigate him while at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

Musk's tweets about launching a litigation department came one day after Business Insider reported that one of his companies, SpaceX, paid a \$250,000 settlement in 2018 after a SpaceX flight attendant accused him of sexual misconduct. Musk has denied the allegation, saying "it never happened."

In another tweet about the litigation department Friday, Musk wrote: "We will never seek victory in a just case against us, even if we will probably win. We will never surrender/settle an unjust case against us, even if we will probably lose."

He posted the tweets amid a whirlwind day of tweeting while he was in Brazil for a meeting with Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro.

Tweets from Musk, who has more than 94 million Twitter followers, have been under especially close scrutiny since he announced April 25 that he had agreed to purchase Twitter for \$44 billion. On May 13, he announced the deal was "temporarily on hold" as he investigated concerns the social media platform was overrun with fake accounts.

University of California, Los Angeles law professor James Park said Musk's tweets about hiring litigators appear connected to the sexual misconduct allegation.

"He's in a situation where either he's going to be a defendant, or he himself might be a plaintiff, bringing libel cases against the person who is accusing him of this conduct," Park said.

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